

Liceu



Opera  
Barcelona

# La gata perduda

ARNAU TORDERA I  
VICTORIA SZPUNBERG



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Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under  
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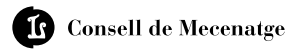
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Season 2022-2023

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Entities

# La gata perduda

ARNAU TORDERA I  
VICTORIA SZPUNBERG

Newly created community opera produced by the Liceu

Opera in five acts

Based on the original libretto by Victoria Szpunberg

Performances on 5 and 7 October

Absolute premiere

**Approximate duration:** 2 h 25 min

**Act I:** 25 min / **Act II:** 30 min / **Act III:** 10 min / **Intermission:** 30 min / **Act IV:** 20 min / **Act V:** 30 min

## Artistic information

### Musical direction

Alfons Reverté

### Stage direction

Ricard Soler Mallol

### Set design and atrezzo

Adrià Pinar

### Costumes

Montse Amenós

### Direction of the choreography

Tuixén Benet

### Choreography

Anna Macau

### Illumination

Cube.bz

(María de la Cámara and Gabriel Paré)

### Video creation

Miquel Àngel Raió

### Choir coordination

Cristina Colomer

### Assistant stage manager

Inés García

### Assistant set designer

Francesc Serra

### Costume assistant

Marc Udina

### Assistant to video creation

Arantxa Melero

### Musical assistants-pianists

Daniel Tarrida, Miquel Villalba,

Maryna Naydon

### A Production of the Gran Teatre del Liceu

### Set construction

Delfini (Plataforma), Nussli (Bastida)

### Street Art

Eledu, JLoca, Kenor, Morcky, Musa and

Nemo in collaboration with the Impulsem

cooperative, and Antoine Careil de Street

Art Barcelona / Arnau Gallery

Montana Colors

Montó Pinturas

### La gata comparsa

José Menchero in conjunction with

trainees from the Escola Massana

### Prop construction

Taller d'escenografies Castells

Ventura & Hosta Cartons

Nafka

Euro Segway Barcelona

Joan Viscasillas

### Costume design

Dona Kolors

Goretti Puente

T.I.A.

Top Manta

### Photographic printing on the costumes

Tot Kedabé, S.L.

### Photographic portraits on the costumes

Jordi Guillumet and trainees of the

Faculty of Communication Blanquerna

### Posters design

Ocupacional Sínia and trainees from the

Escola Massana

### Video recording and editing

Jordi Parés, Elio Mulas, Francesc Sitges-

Sardà, Uri Lázaro Planas

## Cast

### **Magnate**

Pau Armengol

### **Secretary**

Joan Sáez

### **Architect**

Rocío Martínez

### **Healer**

Marta Infante

### **Detective**

Albert Casals

### **The drug dealer of El Raval**

Óscar Peñarroya

### **The cat**

Dianne Ico

### **El Raval Choir**

Agrupació coral i recreativa Les Flors de Maig, Cor de dones de Xamfrà, Cor Drassanes, Cor Turull, Coro Kudyapi, Dona Gòspel, KorraVal Evolution, Grup Mon Raval, Musicals' Choir, Societat Coral Girasol, TrencaCors

### **Heavy Punk Choir**

José Domínguez, Leandro Crespo and musicians of Taller de Músics

### **Hip-Hop Choir**

Musicals' Choir and Coro Kudyapi

### **Rumba Choir**

Associació Carabutsí

### **Drinkers' Choir of Marsella Bar**

El Cor Canta

### **Invisibles Choir**

Cor dels Invisibles

### **Street Musics**

Taller de Músics

### **Batucada**

Batucada de l'Escola de Músics

### **Orchestra**

Orchestra of the Conservatori del Liceu

### **Dancers**

Jordi Calpe  
Mario García  
Raúl Lorenzo  
Andrea Madrid  
Sònia Prado  
Maria Quero  
Ariadna Saltó  
Anna Serra  
Anna Tejero

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## Participating

### El Raval Choir

#### Agrupació coral i recreativa Les flors de maig

Celia Alcover  
Núria Alemany  
Josep Aleu  
Lydia Ballarín  
Cristóbal Bretones  
Tatús Catañá  
Josep Centelles  
Ana M. de Palacio  
Teresa de Palacio  
Montse Domínguez  
Joana Duch  
Manel Esteban  
Octavi Fontecha  
Joan Izquierdo  
Núria Mallarach  
Eulàlia Marraco  
José Mediñá  
Esther Monfort  
Ricard Pallarolas  
Angelina Pérez  
Luci Quintero  
Antonia Veredas  
**Cor de dones de Xamfrà**

Clara Díaz  
Mercedes Díaz  
Cèlia Gurmaches  
Juliette Lemerle  
Margarita Montada  
Francesca Navarrete Checa  
Elinor Ridler  
Magalí Sala  
Ester Santamaría  
Kuku Sergu  
**Cor Drassanes**

Marta Albarran  
Sílvia Boldú  
Ramon Calsada  
Jordi Camps  
Isabel Coloma  
Laura Comanges  
Thais Domènech  
Andreu Enfedaque  
Manuela Fernández  
Rod Fiorito  
Susana González  
Nora Gorriaran  
Bego Gutiérrez  
Conxita Gutiérrez  
Verónica Kuchinow  
Heike M. Martínez  
Àngels Mateo  
Anna Mayoralgo  
Josep Maria Nin  
Montserrat Parera  
Óscar Peñarroya  
Mireia Plana  
Marta Puigdemengolas  
Montse Ribas  
Josep Ribes  
Teresa Ripoll  
Marc Rodríguez  
Llorenç Rovira

Imma Salmeron  
Javi Sánchez  
Noèlia Sánchez-Pajares  
Joan Sagalés  
Margarida Serrat  
Margaret Themistanjioglus  
Betlem Vegara  
Anna Xalabarder  
**Cor Turull (also Cor d'amistats)**  
Dina Albareda  
Edna Albareda  
Óscar Blanco  
Joan Calicó  
Laia Cortiella  
Mireia Fabregat  
Iris Fornis  
Manel García  
Alfred Garrido  
Alan Jornet  
Raquel Lozano  
Marta Panadès  
Alba Pujol  
Marina Reyes  
Cristina Rizzo  
Maria Serradó  
Marc Vendrell  
**Coro Kudyapi (also Cor dels Invisibles)**

Jahaira Rikisha Alarcón  
Eddie Alcedo  
Aleix Jensen Baquirán (also Cor Hip-Hop)  
Ana Karen Baquirán  
Ralph Lawrence Bueno (also Cor Hip-Hop and soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Eduard Caringal (also Cor Hip-Hop)  
Bernadette Catilo  
Patrick Ceria  
Patricia Jane Chipongian  
Leira Lis Clérigo  
Jomari Edangalio Chávez (also Cor Hip-Hop and soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Alvin Joe Domingo  
Yven Marie Enoserio  
Nica Santana de la Goiabo  
Ruthman Junior Galicia (also Cor Hip-Hop)  
Àngel Leal  
Charmæ Llagas  
Jynwell Cyndra Maloles (also soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Kristine Manzano Manuel  
Erin Mendoza  
Seira Gail Mercado  
Phrencis Mier (also Cor Hip-Hop)  
Jewel Miles Cortez  
Amber Ocampo  
Amethyst Ocampo  
Rhianne Ocampo  
Katrina Nicole Oamil Tagorda  
Kiara Ordinario de Guzmán  
Krisha Ordinario de Guzmán  
Daniela Ortega  
David Pacilán  
Ryan Jay Quinto

Fenina Ramos  
Dianne Regualos  
Benjamin Eladio Serafica  
Camille Rose Tabuno  
Aivan Tubón  
Nelissa Tubón  
Geoffrey Ubas  
Daniela Mae Vicente  
**Dona Gòspel**  
Joy Omolere Akindayini  
Evelyn Akpomdaye  
Oluwtoyin Fayombo  
Mariam Gabriel  
Míriam Tarruell  
Núria Guasch  
Stella Maxwell-Etuk  
Loveth O. Nnamaka  
Joy Omorogivea  
Favour Osagie  
Carmen Trevejo  
**Grup Mon Raval**  
M. Isabel Asín  
Francisco Galeote  
Marga Garcia Puigbarraca  
María Teresa Hernández  
Mercè Juan  
Esther López  
Esther Magich  
Susana Magich  
Pablo Martí  
Lluïsa Martínez  
Enric Mena  
M. del Carmen Pinto  
Maite Roca

**KorraVal Evolution**  
Sandra Calisto  
Ana María Curbelo  
Benilda Díaz  
Dori Gallardo  
Alicia Iniesta  
Maricarmen Martínez  
Rut Monràs  
Eloisa Rochina  
Ana María Salillas  
**Musicals' Choir**  
Deidre Atiénzar  
Georgina Bargalló  
Mariona Bargalló  
Daniel Bermejo  
Ona Casals (also chorist and comparsa)  
Núria Casares (also chorist and comparsa)  
Raquel Centeno (also chorist)  
Sara Cosgaya  
Caterina Cursach  
Clàudia Curtichs (also soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Laia Farrés (also Hip-Hop choir)  
Paula Fernández (also chorist)  
Nil Ferré de Lacoma (also comparsa and soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Júlia García  
Verónica García (also comparsa)  
Joan González (also soloist of Cor del Raval)

Milos González  
Mafalda Gornés (also soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Martí Grau (also Batucada and soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Mouna Halhoul el Harrak (also comparsa and chorist)  
Miquel Jaume (also soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Clara Juan  
Iago Lorenzo (also Hip-Hop choir)  
Arnau Luengo (also soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Albert Martí (also comparsa and soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Maria Martí  
Judith Martínez (also comparsa and member of the choir)  
Paula Martínez (also comparsa)  
Núria Molina (also comparsa)  
Adrià Moral (also comparsa)  
Mariona Ortiz (also Hip-Hop choir)  
Darek Guayanay Paredes  
Daniela Pérez (also comparsa and soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Maria Pons  
Violeta Pons  
Quimsaina Powers-Fernández (also comparsa and soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Frida Puigardeu (also comparsa)  
Sibyla Thaïs Riegele (also soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Martina Riera (also comparsa)  
Adrià Rodríguez (also comparsa)  
Paula Romera (also soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Júlia Ruiz (also comparsa)  
Ona Salteras (also comparsa)  
Noa Santiago (also comparsa)  
Sergi Sarraute  
Carles Tomàs (also comparsa)  
Chloé Valdeolmillos (also comparsa and soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Gerard Valdez  
Júlia Vera  
Abel Alexander Vidal (also soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Rita Wabotay (also Hip-Hop choir, comparsa and soloist of Cor del Raval)  
Àlex Yang (also Cor Hip-Hop, comparsa and soloist of Cor del Raval)  
**Societat Coral Girasol**  
Andrés Ardevol  
Montserrat Expósito  
Juan Guitart  
Luís Martínez  
Manel Santo  
**TrencaCors**  
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Magda Blanes  
Ana Borralló  
M. Jesús Brezosa  
M. Elizabeth Buechler  
Jaume Costa

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Anna Ferri  
Raquel Figa  
Jordi Font  
Anna García  
Pilar García  
F. Xavier Gornés  
Eva Labró  
Raquel Lacuesta  
Albert Martí  
Laia Martorell  
Carlota Moliné  
Rafael Moral  
Maite Muntalà  
Antònia Clara Pons  
Núria Prunés  
Eugènia Ribera  
Esther Sales  
Carmen Soriano  
Isabel Torras  
M. José Vilches  
Judith Viñas

### **Drinkers' Choir of Marsella Bar El Cor Canta**

Mònica Arnal  
Núria Berrio  
Marina Canalias  
Isabel Colomer  
Míriam Colomer  
Ana María Delgado  
Cecília Dueñas  
Ramon Ferrer  
Josep Fontdevila  
Marcos Franco  
Iren Ghafouri  
Jordi M. Gibert  
Emma González  
Milo Gratacós  
Christina Harslem  
Valérie Joubert  
Montse López  
Joan Martí  
Lourdes Martínez  
Marta Mauri  
Miquel Oriol  
Sígfrid Quer  
Montserrat Riera  
Joan Sallarés  
Enric Sancho  
Blanca Torrubia

### **Cor dels Invisibles**

Dolors Aguadé  
Jaume Albir  
Maite Bautista  
Francesc Blázquez  
Patricia Clavenzani  
Feli Cunillé  
Alba Galofré  
Cristina García  
Sílvia Julià  
Pepa Líndez  
Helena Privat  
Itziar Santiago  
Gemma Sobrino  
Isabel Torre  
Anna Vilanova

### **Rumba Choir Associació Carabutsí**

José Antonio (Chele) Amaya  
Juan Daniel Amaya  
Enric Batista  
Manuela Carbonell  
Levy Gabarre  
Manuel Gabarre

Santos Gabarre  
José García  
Sam García  
Abraham Hernández  
José Jiménez  
Jocabed Jiménez  
Elisa López  
**Heavy-Punk Choir**  
Leandro Crespo  
Josep Domínguez  
**Músics del Taller de músics**  
José Abuín  
Élia Blasco (as a street musician)  
Martí Burgués  
David Cano  
Laia Fandós  
Manel Maylinch  
Alba Ruiz (as a street musician)  
Javier Vallés

### **Batucada**

Nil Bello  
Jon Blasco  
Ricard Domínguez  
Oscar Fernandez  
Uriel Sarraute

### **Orchestra of the Conservatori del Liceu**

Víctor Alonso  
Ana Arguedas de Miguel  
Pau Armengol  
Jan Badia  
Lluc Badia  
Cristina Ballarín  
Àngela Bel  
Jan Bernal  
Elena Veena Birtwistle  
Jorge Bosch  
Estrella Byrne  
Neus Camps  
Aitor Canales  
Jordi Cid  
Bernat Clota  
Maria Cristóbal  
Manuel del Horno  
Francesc Domènech  
Aina Filella  
Cristina Fort  
Amy García  
Iván García  
Sergio García  
Víctor García  
Ariadna Gómez  
Naiara Gonçalves  
Francisco Javier González  
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Joan Juanico  
Dai Mar López  
Sofía López  
Celia del Carmen Macia  
Miquel Martínez  
M. José Mauri  
Mario Membrives  
Héctor Molina  
Lluc Montmany  
Marta Moro  
Rubén Muñoz  
Yana Nagaychuk  
Emma Ortega  
Santi Peñarroja  
Xavier Peramiquel  
Miquel Pérez  
Andreu Pla  
Arnau Plaja

Guillermo Plazas  
Nihma Poch  
Daniel Polo  
Mina Popovic  
Marina Prat  
Pere Puertas  
Maria Quifones  
Naomi Ramírez  
Cristina Rivero  
Álvaro Rodríguez  
José Miguel Román  
Diva Sá  
Anastasia Salazar  
Omar Salcedo de la Torre  
Carla Sanuy  
Albert Secanell  
Maya Belén Sevilla  
Jorge Sierra  
Aitana Sostres  
Esteve Ticó  
Marcelo Ignacio Vega  
David Vergé  
Gemma Vigo  
Carlos Villa  
Tristan Voirpy  
Sara Zayani

### **Musicians of the Orchestra of el Gran Teatre del Liceu**

Birgit Euler  
Matthias Weinmann

### **Dona Kolers**

Juli Acebedo  
Atika Badaoud  
Núria Casanovas  
Precius Nosakhare  
Laura Ortiz  
Aicha Stitou

### **Top Manta**

Hamidou Ba  
Samba Boiro  
Cheikh Diakhate  
Yacine Diop  
Binta Fall  
Mohamed Fall  
Aziz Faye  
Djiby Gadiaga  
Baye Ibra Gaye  
Ibrahima Gueye  
Natàlia López  
Hamdy Mall  
Natàlia López  
Oumy Manga  
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comunitària i intercultural  
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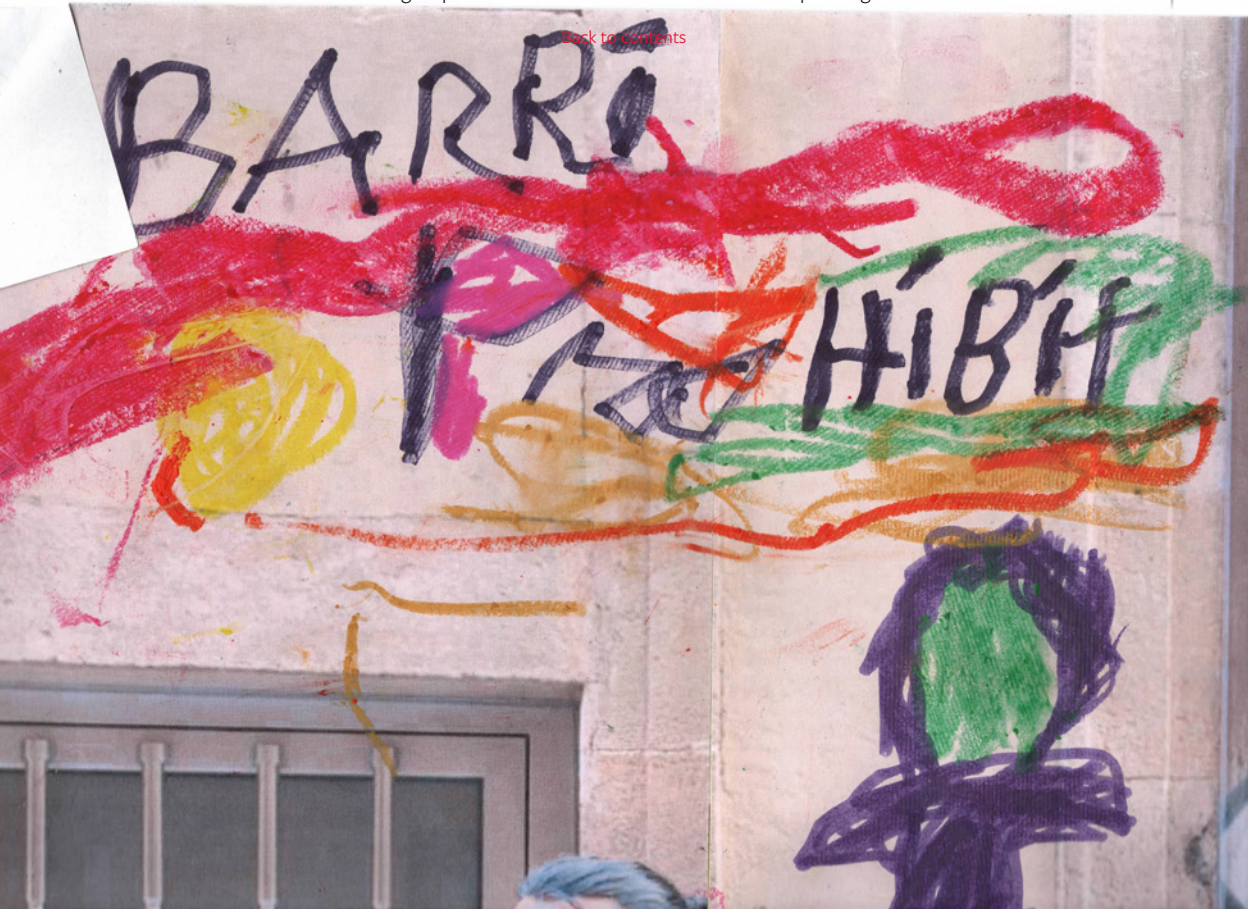




“Art belongs to everybody and nobody. Art belongs to all time and no time. Art belongs to those who create it and those who savour it. Art no more belongs to the People and the Party then it once belonged to the aristocracy and the patron. Art is the whisper of history, heard above the noise of time. Art does not exist for art’s sake: it exists for people’s sake. But which people, and who defines them? He always thought of his own art as anti-aristocratic. Did he write, as his detractors maintained, for a bourgeois cosmopolitan elite? No. Did he write, as his detractors wanted him to, for the Donbass miner weary from his shift and in need of a soothing pick-me-up? No. He wrote music for everyone and no one. He wrote music for those who best appreciated the music he wrote, regardless of social origin. He wrote music for the ears that could hear. And he knew, therefore, that all true definitions of art are circular, and all untrue definitions of art ascribe to it a specific function.”

**Julian Barnes,**

*The Noise of Time* (El soroll del temps), 2016



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**Víctor García de Gomar**  
**Artistic Director Gran Teatre del Liceu**

# ***La gata perduda***

*I am a child of this place,  
This is where I come from and to this  
neighbourhood I belong.  
Here I have felt equality and empathy,  
And the friendship that is forged day by day.  
Up with the neighbourhood,  
I'm just another person, I'm from El Raval!*

## Secretari,

Act III, *La gata perduda*

El Raval is the neighbourhood that is the home to the Gran Teatre del Liceu and the area with the highest density of associations per square metre in the European Union: more than 40 nationalities in 1.1 km<sup>2</sup>.

As a cultural icon of the country with a mission of serving citizens, the Liceu is co-leading a community project with entities, organisations and neighbourhood groups: the creation of a participatory, co-created opera where the link between the institution and the neighbourhood is strengthened. Thus, the Liceu is not an oasis or a cultural island isolated from its own environs. The institution's aim is therefore to produce a new opera with different communities around Catalonia every three years, in order to bring this genre closer to all

citizens and audiences and to promote cultural diversity and social cohesion, as well as the recognition of plural identities and multiple visions while recognising individuals' and groups' cultural ability to participate, create and decide on their cultural life and that of their environs.

The objectives of the Liceu social programme (called Opera Prima) are: to activate co-creation processes; to generate a long-lasting project that will be the driving force behind community synergies; to promote a social structuring of the region through artistic creation; to bring opera closer to a diverse population; to raise appreciation, awareness and knowledge; to offer opera professionals at the Liceu a transformative experience; and to make artistic

talent visible through both existing projects and the discovery of new talents. In the encounter with the Other, new possibilities are opened and mutual learning about other ways of doing is activated.

Thus, the values that prevail in the Liceu's management and activities today are equal opportunities and equal access to culture, human rights in terms of access to education and artistic participation, art as an instrument of social transformation, interdisciplinarity, community impact through empowerment and the construction of joint meaning, the commitment to innovation, contributing to the deconstruction of stigmas and creating strategies for integration. The ultimately goal is to advocate difference as a value and the richness implicit in difference. This is surely the greatest effort in (re)thinking the institution, the genre and how we act inclusively.

In this first Opera Prima project, which aims to forge bonds and liaise with the stakeholders in the milieu where it has been carried out, as well as exhaustive prospecting, with the invaluable collaboration and participation of the Fundació Tot Raval, with which a link has been established that has helped to answer many questions. We were able to access contacts and entities in the neighbourhood, to link community spaces to explain the project and to together conceptualise the project.

The neighbourhood's involvement is framed within the entire artistic creation process, from the dramaturgy to

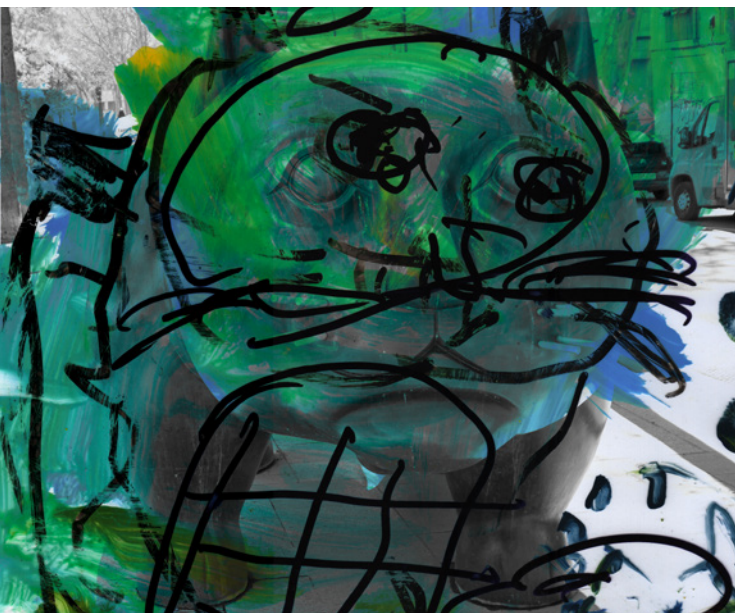
the musical and choral performances, the technical construction and the communication of the project, in permanent dialogue with professionals in the different areas. Ultimately, some 1,000 people will have participated (directly or indirectly), including individuals, entities and organisations (an unusual collaboration between amateurs and professionals). This is the story behind *La gata perduda*, the opera with which the Raval enters the Liceu and with which the Liceu has had the opportunity to open up, get to know and learn about a neighbourhood that is also its own (the reciprocal back-and-forth relationship is interesting to highlight).

It will have meant four years of important collective effort to present this fresh show. Musically conceived by Arnau Tordera, a guitarist, vocalist and leader of the band Obeses, and with the text by Victoria Szpunberg, it moves between the lyrical and the musical worlds, visiting the world's music styles which are so prominent in its streets.

A vital, perhaps unique, space, the Raval is the perfect counterpoint to the Establishment. A real contrast between the Apollonian-Dionysian visions of an orderly Eixample and a labyrinthine Raval. Efforts have been made to narrow and rationalise the conflict, but the Raval has become an urban nucleus with a vital spirit of resistance. We focus on anonymous people: the inhabitants with their hybrid identities who live in the neighbourhood. The libretto was creat-



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ed based on their anecdotes, experiences, stories, dreams and agitations. From this book by Victoria Szpunberg, the inspired Arnau Tordera has generated (in a two-year process) a score brimming with good music. The artistic team, both Victòria and Arnau, have dived into the neighbourhood (through interviews, reading documentation, attending events, etc.) in order to capture the reality of the milieu in the book and the score. Thus, although the artist has the ultimate freedom when it comes to writing, we have a wide range of experts and local people who are seeking to shatter clichés and inspire the libretto.

*La gata perduda speaks of the struggle of a neighbourhood that does not resign itself to being manipulated. A united neighbourhood that stands against the powers-that-be and is in itself a madcap character that will be per-*

formed by the large choir of the amateur choirs of the Raval. Around this neighbourhood, there are people who want to speculate and use the Raval for their own interests, such as the magnate who observes the neighbourhood from the upper part of the city, who is concealing a secret and mobilises the healer, the architect and the detective to solve a series of facts that run counter to his designs. The cat represents a character who undergoes a transformation during the opera; someone who decides to be free, who does not bend in the face of abuse and represents hope.

Everything is new in this score by Arnau Tordera; all the parts that join together to give life to something new, transcendental and magical will only be able to be heard for the first time during the rehearsals. The music has been unknown until now, it has never

been heard and was only dreamt up and imagined by its creator (he will also hear it for the first time). Here, then, is a unique experience of creation, a life-giving process of discovery that demands great concentration and dedication on the part of all the creative teams and the theatre itself.

In terms of the sound experience, Arnau Tordera has faced the difficult challenge of writing for both professionals and amateurs, integrating traditional sounds of the world with an end result that is easy to understand and enjoy based on irresistible melodies written with the universal and sensitive language of emotions. Arnau has thus combined different views on the different musical styles that can be used in stage music today, with a focus on a symphonic language that is connected with the Romantic opera from the second half of the nineteenth century, as well as with film soundtracks, without sacrificing lyricism and with the mission of making the melodic line understandable: 'The aesthetics of this thought comes from popular music and results in this score', says the composer.

We should not forget the stage version of the play by Ricard Soler Mallol, stage director (with set design by Adrià Pinar), who thus brings the story to life and interprets the text by Victoria Szpunberg to explain the plot. Thus, the characters live and acquire three-dimensionality, while Arnau's music, Victoria's text and Ricard's stage

work create, define and draw each character's expressions, affections, personalities and intentions.

The cast, made up of local singers (Pau Armengol, Joan Sáez, Rocío Martínez, Marta Infante, Albert Casals, Óscar Peñarroya and Dianne Ico), has perfectly understood the project and its essence. This is the only way we will be able to transmit is to the audiences and seduce and convince them.

On the other hand, also worth mentioning are the costumes of Montse Amenós, made by Dona Kolors and Top Manta, where portraits of Raval's residents printed onto the clothes make real the association between representation and ordinary life in the neighbourhood. Colours, diversity, plurality and real dialogue have been the constant features of these impeccable costumes.

The Liceu is a mediator in this project more than ever, and *La gata perduda* is the perfect vehicle to give visibility to diversity and to create a real path for people's integration and development.

This new show is part of the 'LiceuApropa' programme, launched with the clear conviction that art can be used to transform people, as well as with the desire for social inclusion through culture and to bring to fruition the right to be an active author of culture and engine of creative expression.

The neighbourhood has already contributed a lot to the Liceu's cultural projects. As a cultural organisation with more than 175 years of history, this proj-

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ect was a real challenge, and at each step in its evolution, the institution has grown even further. It has enriched the Liceu, and it is essential to sincerely acknowledge the many lessons that the neighbourhood and this project have taught us. With *La gata perduda*, the Liceu is taking a step forward in its organic development towards becoming a more sensitive and committed institution: a twenty-first century Liceu. It is also a symbol of how the opera can give a neighbourhood an opportunity to express itself and at the same time how the neighbourhood can connect with one of its institutions with which it previously had little connection. Each community project is defined by the people, organisations and groups involved and by its cultural, social, political and educational context.

Finally, one might think from the outside that this show does not have a real desire for change, but the unanimous assessment is that the initial impetus, the fact of undertaking a project like this one, is positive and that *La gata perduda* is now the Raval's opera, not only the Liceu's. It is a collective fact with an 'anthem' that represents it! Music, thus, is the necessary pretext and the subtle vibration to enjoy, play and grow. Just the first note of the score on stage on the days of the performances will let us know that we are no longer the same as we used to be. It has been an intense process where the opera had to revitalize a neighbourhood, unless perhaps the neighbourhood has revitalised a cultural project such as the Liceu?

***Up with the life of El Raval!  
Stitching the wrongs back together,  
The neighbourhood beats fraternally.  
Up with the neighbourhood  
The clamour of a choral cry resounds in  
the squares.  
It is an indomitable neighbourhood,  
But it resists the winds of fate.  
All the waters of the world stop there,  
A chaos made of jumbled lives.  
Up with the neighbourhood  
We are the people, we are the Raval!***

**Choir of El Raval,**

***Act V, La gata perduda***



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## **Musical fragments from *La gata perduda***

Selection by the composer and commentaries based on excerpts from a conversation between Arnau Tordera and Víctor García de Gomar, artistic director of the theatre.

### **Act II (whole)**

There is a big difference between Act II and the rest of the play.

Somehow it happens in the Raval, and the challenge has been to translate the experience of the neighbourhood into music. Crossing the Raval, experiencing the continuous impacts and capturing it in the score was an exercise in the construction of what seems to be chaos, but always based on a controlled architecture. It is a sequence of thrilling and contrasting micro-scenes and a very exciting compositional exercise. It approaches the labyrinth that Victòria has written, proposing a musical aesthetic and instrumental resources.

### **Scenes with the three experts**

These singular characters are explicit quotations (with a personal vision) from three specific operatic styles: bel canto, romantic heroic and expressionist.

The three experts embody discursive possibilities run through the composer's filter and are very provocative.

### **Scene before the end of the first part**

We learn about the Magnate's nightmare and therefore try to generate a dreamlike context in which harmony, textures and melodies (with French inspiration) create and evoke this 'Dalí-like dream'.

### **Appearance of the Cat**

This character is articulated from fiction and therefore ingredients had to be provided that would contrast with others. It has this magical, unrealistic feel and represents one of the most emotionally intense moments for the audience's enjoyment.

### **Two fragments from the El Raval Choir**

The first one is presented in Act II above, and the second one is called Requiem for the Secretary. At these two points, the chorus takes centre stage, highlighting the expressive possibilities of the text. The first shows the frenetic energy of a proud neighbourhood fighting against stigma and in favour of difference, while the second is a reflection on the invisible deaths to which society seldom pays attention. In this case, it's a tribute to everything that doesn't make the front pages of the newspapers yet nonetheless feels important to someone.

“We need to understand that the arts produce impacts as complex as the human beings who create and enjoy them, and that to respect their different manifestations and purposes is neither an abandonment of values nor a sop to liberalism.”

**François Matarasso,**

*Use or ornament?*, 1997

# Musical moments

## *La gata perduda*

### *Arnau Tordera I*

Compositor



Dress designs by Montse Amenós for the choirs of *La gata perduda*

# Musical moments

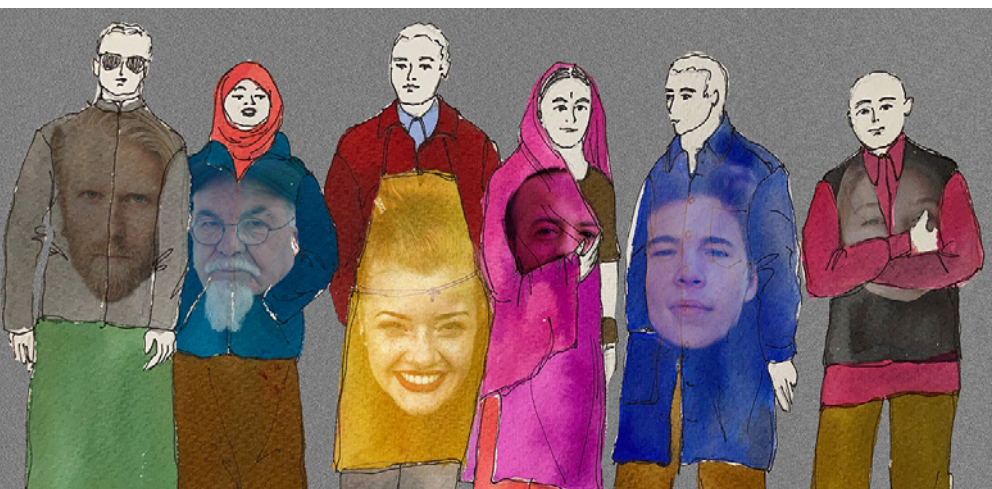
*Before reading the text below, bear in mind that this is a premiere and that continuing to read it will reveal spoilers in the plot.*

- 1 Mobile phones have been a real nuisance in theatres and concert halls. The prelude, which precedes the action, will not be provided by the orchestra but heard through the sound of one of these mobile phones. Specifically, the sound of a call that contains one of the leitmotifs that will appear throughout the opera.
- 2 The orchestra itself appears with a mysterious, sombre texture that quickly explodes into a first glimpse of the Cat's theme, a solely orchestral hint at the solution to the show's enigma.
- 3 After this brief but intense introduction, one of the most unique musical dialogues of the opera unfolds. The Magnate and the Secretary embody two very contrasting social realities, and both the music and the type of vocal technique they use underscore each of their peculiarities. The Magnate's sudden mood swings and psychological instability are countered by the kindness and servility of the Secretary.
- 4 The first solo piece comes with the Magnate's performance of *I Am Not the Son of Any Lineage*. It is a fragment that reveals the character's inner world and evil ambition expressed through the grandiloquence of the musical framework as a whole. A brass and percussion accompaniment, from which melodic arcs on string appear, testifies to his murky, powerful dimension.



## Musical moments

- 5 A fast, rattling snare drum rhythm, followed by insistent percussive choruses of flutes and clarinets, leads us to the first appearance of the Choir of the Raval, which presents another leitmotif, *The Forbidden Neighbourhood*. It is, in fact, the melodic motif that had anticipated the sound of the phone call and goes on to take different forms throughout the opera.
- 6 The three experts, Architect, Healer and Detective, drive the action with a strong essence of *buffa*. Each of them is musically conceived from a synthesis of idiomatic musical resources from different operatic periods. Thus, the Architect expresses herself as a personification of bel canto exhibitionism, the Healer embodies expressionism and the Detective stands as a heroic tenor with a certain decadence.
- 7 The first act culminates with *A Suspicion Lurks within Me*, in which the nervousness of the violins and the rhythmic play between horns and percussion reveal the turmoil that the Secretary is experiencing.
- 8 The second act begins with *We Are from The Raval*’, a collective anthem that has become an important point of unity among all the choirs participating in the project. It is an anthem that alternates the lyrical and celebratory moments and of the neighbourhood with exuberant ornamentation from the woodwinds, along with



Dress designs by Montse Amenós for the choirs of *La gata perduda*

# Musical moments

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more combative ones where the brass and the percussion underscore the aggressive vocal line.

- 9 Compositionally, the most ambitious part of the opera begins at the time when the three experts enter the Raval, inside the labyrinth. From here, a kaleidoscope of micro-scenes unfolding at a dizzying pace lead the action through the neighbourhood's arrow streets, overlapping one another with the aim of generating an experience similar to what one experiences when entering the Raval. Within this sound orgy, there will be space for a few dashes of popular music that appear as yet another piece in this enormous web of sound.
- 10 A dreamlike, vaporous scene helps the audience to digest the intense musical experience offered by the labyrinth and initiates the third act. In this nightmare, unstable harmonies and prolonged resonances are used to generate the unpleasant immersive sensation of a nightmare.

## Musical moments

- 11 With *Wake Up!*, the Secretary bursts in and cuts the dreamlike texture short. It begins with an enchanting song sung by the entire choir, *Let's Climb to the Top of the City*, where the vocal melodies, underscored by the orchestra providing rhythmic backing, create a conclusive crescendo that culminates the first part of the opera.
- 12 A consecutive series of minor triads, permanently associated with the shady essence of the Magnate, brings us back to the situation to begin the second part of the opera with the start of the fourth act. The desperation of the three experts because of their failure to find the Cat is exemplified by a sound that never quite finds a harmonic balance.
- 13 The choir arrives at the Magnate's palace and resumes the *Let's Climb to the Top of the City*, which is joined by *The Forbidden Neighbourhood*. This charming assemblage contrasts with the imminent fall of Magnate and the three experts.
- 14 The scene of the seduction between the Secretary and the Magnate has bizarre echoes. It ends up declining into a kind of burlesque tango that is continuously fed by the Magnate's drugged state. It is an anticipation of the dance of death that ends fatally with the Secretary's death.
- 15 One of the other outstanding choral moments is the beginning of the fifth act with *Far, Far Away*, where the Secretary's death is planned. The use of the novena in the melody emphasises the no-place of this death and amplifies it to all deaths that are victims of fate. Moreover, here fate is closely linked to the Wagnerian conceptual universe through a continuous melodic quotation of Siegfried's funeral march.



## Musical moments

- 16 *There is What You See and What You Don't See* is another constant leitmotiv of the opera, which is finally resolved hereafter the experts' friendly surrender. The appearance of the Invisibles, 'those who are never in the limelight', opens the door to a completely rhythmic song, without tonal depth, which is accompanied by the dissonance of brass and alternates with the harmonious voices of the Choir of the Raval, highlighting the neighbourhood's diversity and complicity.
- 17 Finally, the revelation of the main enigma of the plot and the appearance of the Cat offer a fantastic, magical experience of the story. This almost mystical character is expressed through a neat, clear melody that enhances the beauty of its appearance.
- 18 The tribal heartbeat of the neighbourhood, intensified by the almost ethnic-sounding percussion, offers a culminating moment that is sealed with the final rendition of *We Are From the Raval*, and with a deliberately unexpected coda that encourages the spectators' reflection.

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“Art does not change the world. But it does change the people who change the world.”

**François Matarasso,**  
Essay 9.IX.2016



**Victoria Szpunberg**  
Playwright and librettist of *La gata perduda*

# *From writing the libretto to the opera*

When I was commissioned to write a libretto for a community opera about the Raval neighbourhood, I knew the challenge would be as exciting as it was difficult. How could I create a dialogue between the reality of a neighbourhood such as El Raval (as stigmatised as it is unclassifiable), with the experience of a community creation (involving specific practices with which I haven't always felt totally comfortable and that I will later try to explain to avoid any misunderstanding), and the typical conventions of the operatic genre (a genre that is as skilfully crafted and conventional as few others are) and, to top it off, to have everything connect in some way with my writing? I spent the first two months mulling these questions over while reading amazing material about the history of the neighbourhood (especially the book *Matar el Chino* [*Kill the Chinese Man*], by Miquel Fernández), taking walks around the neighbourhood and the surroundings, doing a load of interviews with the neighbourhood locals, speaking to people who are part of the

artistic and logistic team of the Òpera Prima project—especially the composer, Arnau Tordera, and the stage director, Ricard Soler—and jotting down disjointed ideas in a notebook.

One of the premises that I wanted to follow was to write a plot with epic, surrealist and tragicomic traits, where powerful emotions could be combined with fantasy and action. These are dramatic resources that contemporary theatre sometimes does not include but that are more typical of the operatic genre, however. With the first interviews over and done with, one question that proved to be fundamental to me is that this libretto had to have a significant political component; otherwise, I wouldn't be doing justice to one of the neighbourhoods with the most association activity in the city. I also thought long and hard about how I could get the testimonies I'd been collecting to engage in dialogue with a plot where imagination, and even fantasy, came in. It was clear to me that the opera wouldn't be a text of a documentary nature, but at the same time,

I felt the responsibility not to abandon the testimonies.

The original libretto, the one I gave to Arnau Tordera before he began the task of composing, was full of symbolic elements; it had a fairly open, free, intriguing form, as I understand this neighbourhood to be: ungovernable and full of elements that are unexpected and escape hegemonic logic. I tried to get this irreverent form to infect the writing. I talk about the ‘original libretto’ because, during the composition process, Arnau was changing things, some that were very important, essential, to me and others that have to do with more rhythmic, musical issues. I also have to say that he did an immense job of composing, he put his soul into it and I’ve ended up accepting that the changes to the libretto are geared towards improving the operatic composition. At first, I experienced it as a kind of mourning, I suffered and I even got angry. Finally, I ended up accepting that the opera world is really very complex. I’ve had to forgo some personal ways of doing things and some of my original ideas but, sometimes, it can be healthy to move away from the middle a bit, to observe and listen to others, even if you don’t completely agree. At the end of the day, this project is a ‘community opera’ and it draws on an entire team of people, a variety of voices and ways of doing things. Each person has been making

their own contribution, and it’s natural that some can better identify with the final result than others.

I’d like to go back to my earlier comment about the task of community art. I’ve said that often, these kinds of social art or community creation proposals have made me feel somewhat uncomfortable. I don’t want to generalise, just to warn of the danger of taking artistic processes, which often pass through the most ‘ungovernable’ places, those that defy classification or evaluation, and trying to classify them and turn them into a trend. I’d like to return to a tweet from a while ago that I’ve also cited on other occasions; I won’t say who wrote it but only transcribe part of its content: ‘Hi, cultural managers: suggesting to artists that they do projects that “communicate” “social” messages is the same thing as asking a doctor to hand out prayer cards in the surgery. It’s not art: it’s propaganda. It’s not a synergy: it’s extortion’.

I’d like to thank the Liceu team for letting me wish, get confused, contradict myself, argue and dream during this writing process. Teamwork is meaningful when your own voice isn’t drowned out and when art isn’t instrumentalised. During the writing, I emphasise, I had a great time; I learned from every person I interviewed; I fought with the rhymes, the symbols, with every word and idea... The end result is part of a long journey where many people are taking



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part and where I hope my first push will make a good impression. Librettists are the great unknowns within the operatic world; they are usually almost forgotten names. It's not a question of egos, but I'd like to take advantage of this article to defend an extremely important task; it's not only defending the person who gives the title, creates some characters or a plot, but defending someone who makes a whole world come alive.

Fragment of the book *Temporada d'òpera 22/23* published by Amics del Liceu

Dress designs by Montse Arenós for the choirs of *La gata perduda*



# *La gata perduda,* a fable with El Raval

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**Ricard Soler Mallol**

With a deluxe team, I have had the challenge of directing *La gata perduda*, a project that aims to unite two such heterogeneous elements as the Raval and the Gran Teatre del Liceu in a newly created opera. The libretto and composition propose a story, a tale: a cat has disappeared and the search is on in the neighbourhood. Through fiction with a touch of thriller, with humour and loads of symbolism, this piece presents the unique flavour of the Raval and the city. In order to bring this story to the stage, we have devised a community project with the collaboration of more than 400 citizens from the Raval, both onstage and backstage. This is the challenge.

*La gata perduda* presents a traditional tension in the opera world between high and low, the powers-that-be and the people. The powers-that-be, symbolised by an ambitious, ostentatious comprised of a colossal choir of residents of the neighbourhood. Three eccentric, comical characters are the right hands of this capricious Magnate. Together they try to domesticate the neighbourhood, to turn it into a global museum, to transform it urbanistically but ultimately to strip it, that is, to deprive it of the urban life that resides there. The Raval, spurred by the character of the Magnate's secretary, a resident of the neighbourhood who works for the powers-that-be, tries to oppose and confront the Magnate's interference. Victoria Szpunberg's libretto presents us with a globalised world where the consequences of a system ruled by economic profit have a clear, direct impact on the people, neighbourhoods and lives of their citizens.

'Raval' comes from Arabic word 'Ravad' or 'outskirts'. El Raval is a neighbourhood outside the walls, the neighbourhood of the port of Barcelona, a space on the margins, a borderland, a marginal space, the space of ignominy... Throughout the history of the Raval, also called Chinatown or the fifth district, it has been a longed-for yet detested space, and in recent decades the neighbourhood has been the target of successive urban planning operations with the aim of manipulating and dominating it. Onstage, we have represented the neighbourhood as a space under construction, a site under construction that symbolises the multiple attempts to redefine the Raval from the architectural side of power. A power

that we have situated in a floating palace, a platform rising above everything and everyone, from which the goal is control, transform or clean up the neighbourhood.

But the neighbourhood is its people. Its idiosyncrasies, what makes it unique, is its social fabric, the relationships among people, among the different communities that live there, the encounters in public spaces, in the corners, on the Rambla, in the public venues, in the shops... Onstage, more than 300 people embody the Raval, the heart of this opera, and each of them is wearing a portrait of another Raval citizen, leading to a multiplying effect of faces: what defines a neighbourhood and its history is the life and the people who are part of it. The Raval is one of the most socially active



neighbourhoods with the largest number of citizen associations in Europe.

To host this extraordinary Raval Choir, the stage of the Liceu is also becoming a public square: a place for everyone, a meeting place to tell this story. The story is presented as an adventure that takes us through the labyrinth of people, streets, doorways, places and corners in the Raval. We also want to pay tribute to the neighbourhood, one of the most historic districts of Barcelona, via the scenery and choreography, travelling there thanks to the intrigues of the plot.



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Driven by a symbolic cat, the author suggests that fiction has a liberating purpose: the essence of the neighbourhood is stronger than the interference of powers-that-be over it. The Raval is an inscrutable neighbourhood, that adapts, changes, evolves, transforms, mutates and adapts to confront power, but without forgetting. The Raval is as indomitable as *La gata perduda*, a Raval cat, fugitive, empowered and free.

Throughout the project, we have let ourselves be carried away by this liberating spirit and this benevolent nature of *La gata perduda*, and we have striven to dilute the borders, to make porous the architectural barrier that a building like the Gran Teatre del Liceu often represents. We have tried to make the opera house on La Rambla a welcoming home for all the citizens who have made it possible for the Raval to take to the stage and for the Liceu to look towards the neighbourhood. We hope that, at least while this performance lasts, the Liceu and the Raval will feel closer.

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# The Raval: A neighbourhood with great artistic and community talent

When we were called to a meeting at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in October 2018 to talk about a community project they wanted to undertake with the involvement of the neighbourhood and the Foundation, we could never have imagined everything it would come to mean. 'We want to make a community opera', they told us. We thought that the idea of participating in a project like this one, getting as many residents, groups and associations from the neighbourhood involved as possible, was not only wonderful but especially a huge challenge. Yet we were even more surprised to find out that they wanted to create it from scratch: that is, the music, the libretto, the staging... everything would be co-created with the neighbourhood's involvement. It would be a brand-new opera that would talk about the Raval, its people and its everyday life. A fictional story featuring the neighbourhood.

At first, we found just promoting and getting the participation of as many people as possible in an opera a bit complicated, especially doing it from scratch. How would that work? What would it be about? What would

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it tell about the neighbourhood? Who would participate in it? We asked many questions at first, questions that couldn't be answered at the time.

But we at Tot Raval, who have been working together for 20 years to improve quality of life in the neighbourhood, were certain that the challenge of joining the project that the Gran Teatre del Liceu proposed was worth it: not only would it allow its doors to open to the neighbourhood, making it more accessible to many people, but at the same time it would help build a story about what the neighbourhood has decided to be and how it has chosen to show itself. And this, alongside an institution of extraordinary artistic quality like the Gran Teatre del Liceu, was surely the guarantee of success.

Over four years we have worked hard, with the pandemic in the middle. We have shared the project in the different venues where we participate. We have connected groups, associations and entities with the Gran Teatre del Liceu, further helping it to build a close relationship with the groups and residents of the Raval.

From the start, the process involved mutual learning: the artistic side and the community side have always worked together. Residents of the neighbourhood and prominent individuals from the entities and groups in the Raval have spoken with the author of the libretto, Victoria Szpunberg, while Arnau Tordera, the composer of the opera music, walked through the streets of the neighbourhood to hear its rich, diverse 'sound', and the costume designer, Montse Amenós, met the entities and groups that made a living sewing. And in this way, the neighbourhood has been brought into every part of the creative process at different levels. One example is the participation of 270 singers from the neighbourhood's different choirs, who offered us a brief glimpse at the opera during the Festival de Cultura Raval(s); the more than 250 people who lent their faces to different photography sessions as part of the artistic process; and the graffiti artists who participated in the stage sets along with the youths of the neighbourhood. We could fill pages and pages explaining how so many people got involved in this project, all joined by a common point: showing their love of and engagement in their neighbourhood, which has so often been stigmatised. It is a neighbourhood full of creativity, diversity, history, community solidarity and so much more.

We have experienced firsthand the involvement of the team leading the project on behalf of the Liceu. We have seen them get involved with the neighbourhood choir, with the conviction that it was a unique opportunity to continue growing as a community. Yet not everything has been a bed of roses: in such an ambitious project with so many edges, it is normal for there to be complications, doubts and the sense that no progress is being made... However, in the end, with the effort of countless people, the project has moved forward and we have overcome all the obstacles the best we could, always with honesty at the forefront.

We know that we have left out many people and organisations, and you are sure to get to know them and see many of them onstage. The others are offstage.

**“We were certain that the challenge of joining the project that the Gran Teatre del Liceu proposed was worth it: not only would it allow its doors to open to the neighbourhood, making it more accessible to many people, but at the same time it would help build a story about what the neighbourhood has decided to be and how it has chosen to show itself.”**

Thanks to everyone for wanting to be a part of this project, and for your dedication. And thanks to the Gran Teatre del Liceu for bringing us into it and for thinking that it made sense for our community efforts to be part of it.

And now we can declare our slogan loud and clear, with pride: Up with neighbourhood spirit; we're the people; we're the Raval.

We invite you to enjoy and discover the Raval with new eyes. May the show begin.

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# The Odd couple

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**François Matarasso**

31 July 2022

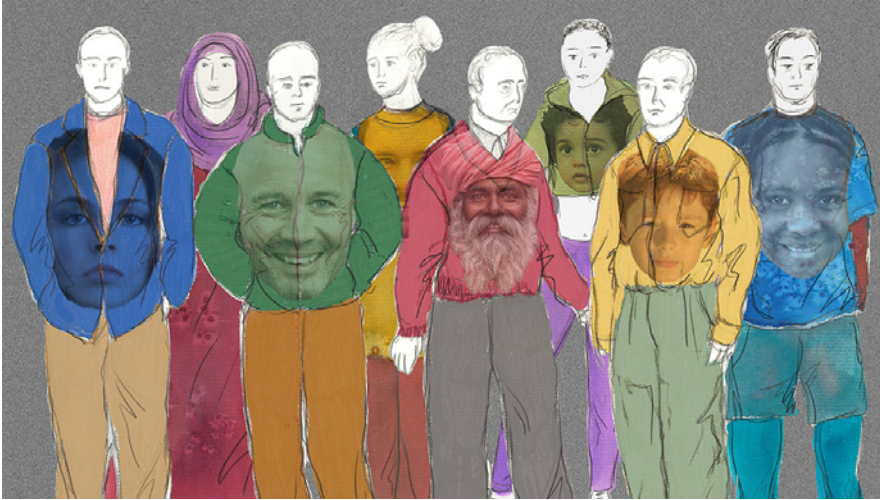
In Neil Simon's Broadway play, *The Odd Couple*, two divorced men agree to share an apartment. They are, of course, wildly unsuited to living together. Uptight, neurotic Felix and carefree, untidy Oscar find each other intolerable. It's a simple dramatic device, made memorable by great performances from Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau who starred in the 1968 film. And, like many simple stories, *The Odd Couple* has a gentle lesson, as Oscar and Felix both learn from the other to find a happier equilibrium in life.

But life is more complicated than plays, and when I first heard about the Liceu's plan to co-create an opera with the people of Raval, I admit that I was doubtful about the outcome. Could there be a more unlikely pairing than this? On one side, the city's historic temple of high culture with all its formal codes and traditions, on the other its liveliest and most diverse neighbourhood, loved and misunderstood in equal measure. What did they have in common? What did they have to say to each other, or to the city of Barcelona?

**“In *La gata perduda*, the hero is not a duke or a princess; it is not even a person—it is Raval, everyone and everything that belongs to this rich, complex and spirited community, symbolised by its cat.”**

More than enough, it turns out. Enough to fill four long years of exploration, as each side discovered the other's daily life and artistic creativity. Enough to keep them together through the pandemic and its immense problems. Enough to create a performance that celebrates the spirit of Raval with and through the spirit of opera. Enough to show that, as human beings, we always have more in common than separates us.

None of this was simple. None of it should be taken for granted. Today, as we finally reach the destination of this long journey, it is important to recognise some of the resources that made it possible. First and perhaps most important, has been a willingness on all sides to accept

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the good intentions of the other. Even when the idea of a community opera was vague and the process uncertain, people were ready to trust that it was being done for the right reasons. And the foundation of that was honest and mutual respect. The opera house approached the community with an open heart, willing to share its resources and talents and to welcome the community's resources and talents. Raval responded in the same spirit, trusting the Liceu to navigate the ship it had launched to a safe harbour.

Also essential was the decision to create a new opera, a story of Raval, shaped by the people of the neighbourhood. In *La gata perduda*, the hero is not a duke or a princess; it is not even a person—it is Raval, everyone and everything that belongs to this rich, complex and spirited community, symbolised by its cat. In most operas, it is the soloists who matter: here, it is the chorus. Raval sings; it paints, it sews, it builds, it dances. It has always done so for itself, in the joy of creation. In *La gata perduda*, it does so for the whole city, amplified by the resources of the Liceu. Raval is the hero tonight.

None of this has been simple or easy (but it has often been a lot of fun).

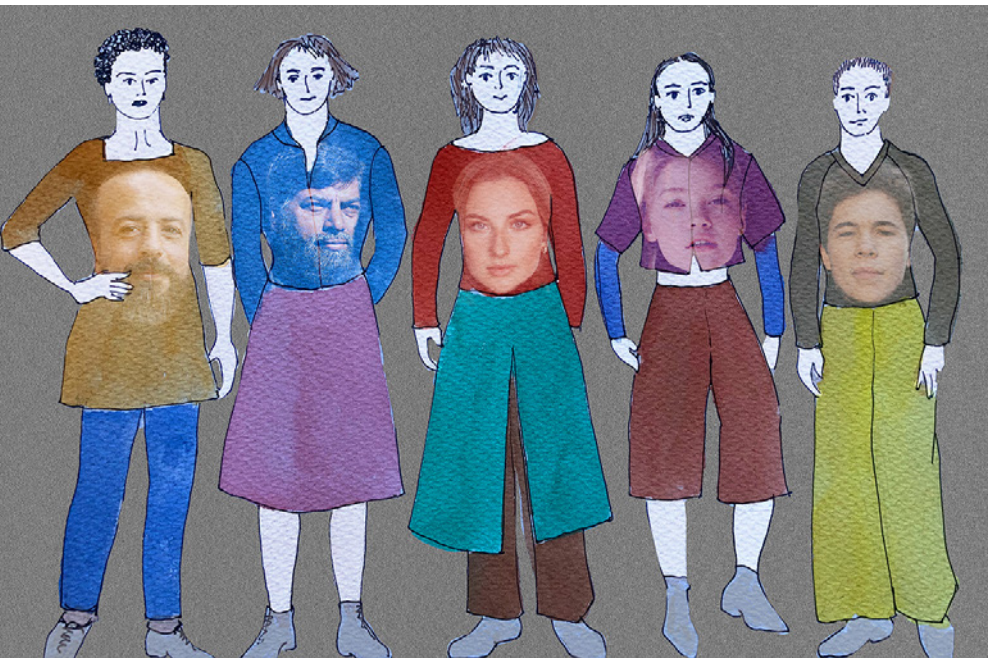
Like Felix, the opera house has learned to relax, adapting its habits and expectations to the lived reality of Raval. The production process has been redesigned so that people can participate while working, going to school and meeting their existing obligations. Established ideas about art and aesthetics have been challenged and enriched. There are more ways for music to move us than we ever knew, and there are still more that we have not yet discovered.

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And like Oscar, Raval has discovered how much higher it is possible to reach with experienced guides who know the mountains like others know their own streets. It is an extraordinary idea to stand on the stage of the Liceu and sing to more than two thousand people. It is an extraordinary achievement to guide people through the processes that allow them to do that for the first time. Together, that is what the Liceu and Raval do tonight, and it is a pure joy to hear and to see their co-creation.

It's true that I was doubtful about this journey at the beginning. I have spent forty years helping professional and non-professional artists to create together, but I have never been involved in anything as ambitious as this project. I know how exciting and rewarding co-creation can be, but I know the big risks involved as well. It is easy to give the appearance of equality in co-creation while the professionals retain control. If *La gata perduda* has so successfully avoided that danger, it is because of the respect that everyone has given to each other's experience, perspective and creative gifts.

Neither the Liceu nor the Raval will be the same after *La gata perduda*. Nor will the audience. And nor, I think, will be the art of opera.



Dress designs by Montse Amadó for the choirs of *La gata perduda*

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INTERVIEW

# Arnau Tordera I



*“La gata perduda demonstrates the belligerent, combative nature of the Raval”*

**Gran Teatre del Liceu. Known in our country as the leader of the band *Obeses*, the singer and composer from Tona makes his debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu with an ambitious project, a participatory community opera. We are talking with Arnau Tordera in the last stretch of the creation of *La gata perduda*. The process of creating an opera is long, but when did you receive the commission?**

Arnau Tordera I : It must have been 2018, when I was studying for a master's degree in music as an interdisciplinary art at the UB. One of the activities was to go to see an opera at the Liceu. The entire class went to the Liceu, and at one point two men came up to me, Valentí Oviedo (General Manager of the Liceu) and Toni Pallès (Director of the Musical, Educational service and Social project departments), and they told me that they had been talking about me for the past week. That came much to my surprise and the surprise of the rest of the class. That they had that in mind, had made some inquiries into who could put such a unique project as this one to music, and there was my name on the table. And from there on we talked about it in many, many meetings, and the project took off with me as the composer. So it was fortuitous, especially at the Liceu and in the context of academic training in the field of opera.

**Is this the most ambitious project you have undertaken in your career?**

Yes, most definitely! And I would say that in every possible aspect of ambition: because of the feat of composing an opera, which in itself is a coup. I have learned over these years of the process that someone deserves recognition even if he or she makes a horrible opera. Because the mere fact of getting to do it is truly an extraordinary life journey in the sense of its implications. And also because of the duration: it is practically two hours of symphonic-choral music, so we're talking about an extraordinarily long score. And, finally, because of the scope of the project: the connections with more than 500 people in the neighbourhood who end up collaborating, whether they are onstage or not.



**This opera has certain features that make it special, in particular the fact that it is a participatory community opera. How is this made visible in your project?**

The opera, its plot, its meaning and its construction can be explained precisely by the fact that it has been conceived from the very start as a community creation with many authors. The goal at all times is for people to take part, not only passively but as an active element in every sense: from the standpoint of creation, the inspiration of the plot, the characters and the role of the choir in this opera, which is a leading role. Ultimately, this has all emerged from the very nature of it as a community opera.

**Let's focus on the opera itself. What is *La gata perduda* talking about?**

In a nutshell, *La gata perduda* shows the belligerent, combative nature of the Raval. To explain this, Victoria developed a kind of fantasy story in which fictitious situations emerge that show that character, that indomitable essence that the Raval has. In short, it speaks of the indomitable power of this neighbourhood, which is not subordinated to any outside elements, although there have been attempts to subordinate it throughout history, not only in recent times but also if you go back in time you will see it again and again; it is a unique neighbourhood in the sense that has this combative, belligerent nature that the opera has somehow sought to represent.

**“We could say that melodically I am more linked to Italian or Mediterranean than to Germanic music”**

### **You are from Tona. Might you feel closer to the Raval after this project?**

Yes, for three years my mind has been immersed in the Raval. I didn't get to live there, but I wanted to really plunge into the Raval, to spend two or three months living there while I was first writing the score. But unfortunately, at that particular moment, the pandemic happened and all those carefully laid plans evaporated. But in any case, mentally I've been living in the Raval for 3 years and I've really immersed myself in the neighbourhood. As a person not from Barcelona, to me Barcelona is really the Raval. It's this area. The main relationship I have had with Barcelona as an outsider has also been with this neighbourhood. Ultimately, my vision of Barcelona goes directly through the Raval.

### **You composed the music, but the libretto is by Victoria Szpunberg. What has the tandem work process been like?**

Well, a creative project done with other people is always more complicated than if you do it alone, but it's simply a matter of human relationships and reaching consensus. The main difficulty I have encountered is that Victoria wrote a theatrical text, and when it came time to transfer her theatrical thinking to the musical world it was complicated by the very nature of the discipline and of the two genres, which have many points of connection but sometimes also have ways of working or mechanisms that I know because I am a musician, and I know how they work and I know the power of music at certain points. It was sometimes hard to reconcile the theatrical world with the musical world. But in the end this tension is the history of opera: the tension between librettists and composers. But in the end we have achieved a balance between the two visions, the two conceptions of the opera, and I think we are both satisfied.

### **Have you had any references in the field of *classical* opera when composing this opera?**

Yes, they have been essential! These iconic operas have been references at all times. In fact, there is a nod to Verdi and another one to Rossini and Wagner in the opera. Without being misunderstood and considered cheeky, I started with Wagner's holistic conception, but the melodic conception is much more Mediterranean. I have completely avoided recitatives and have chosen different types of resources. Therefore, we could say that melodically I am more linked to Italian or Mediterranean than to Germanic music, although the overall conception of the work is probably more Germanic.

### **How can we find a connection between the music of *La gata perduda* and the music you make for *Obeses*?**

They are not different worlds because ultimately they are my works and are therefore united by my aesthetic thought, taste, technique and way of understanding the unique music that is mine.

### **Have you ever been tempted to participate in this project as a singer?**

Yes, I've been tempted the entire time, and, in fact, I wrote a small role thinking that I might play it myself. But I didn't tell anyone, and in the end, because it is a community opera, I gave this honour to another person who will do a fantastic job. But yes, I have to say that yes, at any time I might imagine a little cameo for the composer in the opera, but in the end you have to know the context in which the work is being developed, and in a community opera, I will not steal the opportunity to appear from a person who is from the Raval and is associated with the neighbourhood. Therefore, I have given him this honour without any problem.

## **What does it mean for you to be able to premiere an opera in a theatre like the Liceu?**

This is like a gift, like an unexpected stroke of luck that came by sheer chance, by who knows what kind of luck. It is something I had never dreamt of. There are things that you don't even dream about because there is no way they will happen. Well, that's what happened: the stars conspired and here I am! It will be an immense honour, a pleasure to be able to do it, and I hope it will be the beginning of a journey not only for me but also for other contemporary and local composers to have this opportunity. I should note that this opera is mostly in Catalan. Obviously there are other languages, because we are talking about the Raval and multilingualism is latent, but the opera is in Catalan. Therefore, I hope that this is the beginning of something that will continue to develop over the years.



**“I hope it will be  
the beginning of a  
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have this opportunity”**





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# Biographies

## Artistic team

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### Alfons Reverté

Musical director

He studied clarinet, music theory, harmony, composition, instrumentation and conducting at the Conservatori Superior Municipal de Música de Barcelona, and furthered his conducting studies in England with George Hurst. He has been a member of the Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona i Nacional de Catalunya (OBC) and several chamber music ensembles since 1986. He has conducted orchestras such as the OBC, the symphony orchestras of Tenerife, A Coruña, the Balearic Islands and Vallès, the Pablo Sarasate Orchestra of Pamplona, and the Municipal Band of Barcelona. In 1999 he was appointed assistant conductor of the OBC, a position he held until 2002, when he became principal conductor and artistic director of the Orquestra Simfònica Julià Carbonell de les Terres de Lleida (OJC). He has been guest conductor of the Salta Symphony Orchestra (Argentina), the Mittelsächsisches Theater Orchestra of Freiberg (Germany), Cappella Gedanensis of Gdansk (Poland), the Uppsala Symphony Orchestra (Sweden) and the Sofia Radio Orchestra (Bulgaria), among others. He has recently been appointed Principal Artistic Director of the San Juan Symphony Orchestra (Argentina).

He made his debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in the 2010/11 season with *El retablo de Maese Pedro*. Before he has been musical assistant of *Turandot* (2008/09), *Król Roger* and *Il trovatore* (2009/10).



### Cristina Colomer

Choir coordinator

She studied music at the Conservatori Superior de Música del Liceu. She has been a piano teacher at the Escola de Música and JPC since 2000 and is currently the Head of Studies. She is a choir director in public and semi-public schools in the Els cors de Ciutat Vella project. She composes and arranges works for her children's and adult choirs, as well as for the show 'Love&Rock', part of the Clavé XXI project at the Palau de la Música Catalana. Co-creator of the *Musikal Project*. Founder and choral director of TrencaCors and Musicals' Choir and current director of the Agrupació Coral i Recreativa Les Flors de Maig.

This is her debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu.



## Ricard Soler Mallol

Stage manager

A director and playwright, he lives in Barcelona and Montreal, where he earned a master's degree in theatre thanks to an excellence scholarship. He also holds a degree in stage management and dramaturgy from the Institut del Teatre de Barcelona, a degree in mathematics and telecommunications engineering from the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, and a degree in recorder from the Conservatori Superior Municipal de Música de Barcelona. He is also a founding member of the Obskené company. He has performed more than a dozen shows including indoor theatre, street theatre, circus and music. His most recent creations include *Intersections* (Montreal, 2019) and *Fuenteovejuna, breve tratado sobre las ovejas domésticas*, a contemporary version of Lope de Vega's classic that has won several awards, including the Max for best adaptation of the year and the award for best show at the Festival de Teatro Clásico de México.

This is his debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu.



## Arnau Tordera I

Composer

In addition to training as a composer under the tutelage of Albert Guinovart at the Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya (ESMUC), he also trained as a classical and electric guitarist at the Conservatori de Vic and the Taller de Músics, respectively. As a singer, he studied with Daniel Anglès at the Escola Aules. He also holds a degree in philosophy from the UAB. He is the singer, guitarist and composer of the group Obeses, with which he has released five albums; premiered a symphonic concert with the Municipal Band of Barcelona at the Auditori de Barcelona; and composed and starred in the rock opera *Verdaguer, ombres i maduixes*. Lately he has also recorded his children's cantata *La màquina del temps* in conjunction with the Secretariat of Children's Choirs of Catalonia. In the field of composition, he has written works for the Cor de Cambra de l'Auditori Enric Granados, Orquestra de Cambra Terrassa 48, Camerata 432, Vespres d'Arnadí and the Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona i Nacional de Catalunya (OBC), and his pieces have been performed at the Auditori de Barcelona, Gran Teatre del Liceu and Palau de la Música Catalana, among other venues.

He made his debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in the 2017/18 season with *Paganini Terminator* as part of Off Liceu - Diàlegs Musicals at the Foyer del Teatre.



## Victoria Szpunberg

Librettist

She is a playwright and dramaturgy teacher at the Institut del Teatre and the Escola Superior de Coreografia de Barcelona. In 2000 she was invited to the Royal Court Theatre's International Residency with her first play. Since then, her works have premiered in different national and international festivals and theatres. In addition to her career as an author, she has partnered with different choreographers, signed dramaturgy and theatrical adaptations, worked as a director and written pieces for radio and sound installations. She has also participated in theatre and education projects and has partnered with the Patothom social theatre school. In 2013 she received the Max Award for the best Catalan playwrighting. Her works include *Entre aquí y allá -Lo que dura un paseo* (RESAD of Madrid, Royal Court of London, 2000), *Esthetic Paradise* (Sala Beckett-Festival Grec, 2004) and *La màquina de parlar* (Sala Beckett, 2007; El Maldà, 2017), among others.

She made her debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in the 2020/21 season with *Sis solos soles*.



## Adrià Pinar

Set designer

He has a degree in Set Design and Lighting from the Institut del Teatre de Barcelona, a Master's degree in film projects and an advanced degree in audiovisual and show-business production. In addition, he is trained in sculpture, photography, electronics and circus through several courses and projects. He is currently working in different companies and theatrical productions as a set designer, lighting designer and technical coordinator, and has his own construction workshop and creative space where he can experiment with real materials and proportions while developing his projects. He has collaborated with directors such as Ricard Soler, Sergi Ots, Nau Albet and Marcel Borràs, Joan Arqué, Israel Solà, Joan Yago, Ferran Carvajal, Jordi Aspa, Carme Portacelli, Jesús Nieto, Judith Pujol, Juan Pablo Miranda and Tuixén Benet, among others.

This is his debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu.



## Tuixén Benet

Choreographer

She is a director and choreographer from Barcelona living in Los Angeles. After working as a stage and audiovisual choreographer, she has focused on directing experimental films. *Aloma i Mila*, *Lazarus* and *Solució per a la Tristesa* have been screened at the Cinedans Fest, the Leeds International Film Festival and the Palm Springs ShortFest. Nominated multiple times for best choreography at the UK Music Video Awards for collaborations with artists such as Tame Impala, Polo & Pan or Two Door Cine Club. She directed the show of Javier Mena's world tour and was co-director of the company Les Filles Föllén, which won the New Talents award from the Association of Dance Professionals of Catalonia, with performances at the Mercat de les Flors, Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona, KUMU Art Museum of Estonia and Zoofest of Montreal. She holds a degree in choreography and acting techniques from the Instituto del Teatro and a Master's degree in film directing from the California Institute of the Arts, where she now teaches.

This is her debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu.



## Montse Amenós

Costume design

She has created more than a hundred set and costume designs for theatre, cinema and museography over the last 40 years. Her career was linked to the company Dagoll Dagom for almost two decades; during that time, she and Isidre Prunés were responsible for all the scenery and costumes from *Antaviana* to *T'odio amor meu*. She has continued to collaborate with several shows such as *Scaramouche* and in the new productions of *Mar i cel*. She has worked with most of local directors and very frequently with Adolfo Marsillach, as well as in the last Carles Santos shows: *Chicha Montenegro*, *Shubertnacles humits* and *Patetisme il·lustrat*. She has recently designed the costumes for *Els Jocs florals de Canprosa* and *La Rambla de les Floristes*, shows directed by Jordi Prat i Coll at the TNC.

This is her debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu.



## María de la Cámara and Gabriel Paré (Cube.bz)

Light designers

María de la Cámara and Gabriel Paré have been developing the applied arts in the sphere of space since the mid-1990s. Trained in visual arts, theatre and architecture, they graduated from ESAD with a degree in set design and lighting. Their work stands out for a continuous quest in the fields of space and light and the objects that occupy it with a transgressive attitude that involves placing themselves at the limits of paratheatricality. The conciliatory nature of space and light is the basis of creation and application in their assemblies. They are professors in master's and postgraduate courses for the Universidad Politécnica de Cataluña and the Elisava School of Barcelona, as well as full professors in the performing arts degree at the Escuela Universitaria Eram. They have been nominated for awards such as the Gaudí and the Goya, and several of their productions have been awarded prizes such as the FAD, Butaca, Ciutat de Barcelona and the 2016 Critics' Award for their collaboration with different dance companies.



## Miquel Àngel Raió

Video creator

His professional work is currently focused on video creation for text theatre, opera, dance and circus. He has worked as an advertising director, mainly for the Oviedo and Picnic production companies. He has directed several documentaries that have been presented at the Malaga Festival and the Memorimage of Reus. Since 2009 he has directed the company L'aviador, of which he is a co-founding member. He is also the author of several theatrical texts such as *Els accidents del Petit Príncep* and *Cristalls Irisats de plàstic xinès*. He also spends part of his time teaching, with regular classes at the Bande à Part film school in Barcelona as well as workshops and training courses in Barcelona, Mallorca, Costa Rica and Colombia.

He made his debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in the 2018/19 season with *L'enigma di Lea*.



## Pau Armengol

Magnate. Baritone.

Born in Sabadell, he has trained vocally with Carlos Chausson. He has also taken lessons from Jaume Aragall, Eva Mei, Celso Albelo, Mariella Devia and Plácido Domingo. After earning a doctorate degree in theoretical and computational chemistry from the UAB, he made his debut in Sabadell with the role of Leporello (*Don Giovanni*) and was subsequently selected by the Plácido Domingo Improvement Centre of the Palau de les Arts de València. He has performed the roles of Leporello and Don Giovanni (*Don Giovanni*), Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*), Colas (*Bastien und Bastienne*), Frank (*Die Fledermaus*) Sagrestano (*Tosca*), The Baritone (*The Four-Note Opera*), Martino (*L'occasione fa il ladro*) and others. In the field of oratorio and Lied, he made his debut at the inaugural concert of the Life Victoria 2020 Festival as a Life New Artist and has been chosen as a recipient of the 2020 Bach-Fundació Salvat scholarship. He has been conducted by masters such as Karl-Friedrich Beringer, Roberto Abbado and Plácido Domingo.

He made his debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in the 2021/22 season with *The Magic Flute*.



## Joan Sácz

Secretary

A graduate in Dramatic Art from the Institut del Teatre, he has participated in many family shows, the most recent being *On és la fada Alegria?* (four seasons, at the Capitol and Aquitània theatres) and *Hansel i Gretel* (performing around Spain with La Roda Produccions). He has also performed on Barcelona's stages, both in musical comedies (*El futbol és així*, *de Gai*, *Bed and Breakfast*, *De 9 a 5*, *Records a Broadway*, *Mistela*, *Candela*, *Sarsuela*, *Doo Wop Club* and *El Poliamor és així*, *de complicat*) and in more dramatic monologues (*Les històries de l'avi Josep*). In 2021 he was nominated for the Butaca Awards in the category of best actor in a musical.

This is his debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu.





## Rocío Martínez

Architect. Soprano

She has participated in numerous productions such as *Così fan tutte* (Despina), *La serva padrona* (Serpina), *The Magic Flute* (Queen of the Night and Papagena), *Les contes d'Hoffmann* (Olympia and Antonia), *Le nozze di Figaro* (Susanna), *Weddings in a Monastery* (Lauretta), *Iphigénie en Tauride* (First Priestess and Dona Grega) with Plácido Domingo, *L'arbore di Diana* (Diana), *Don Gil de Alcalá* (Niña Estrella), *Don Pasquale* (Norina), *Carmen* (Frasquita), *Marina* (Marina), *Doña Francisquita* (Francisquita), *Orpheus et Euridice* (Amore), *Das Liebesverbot* (Dorella) and *Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* (Clorinda). He has sung in theatres and auditoriums such as the National Auditorium of Madrid, Palau de les Arts de València, Teatro Massimo Bellini of Catania, Theater of the Maestranza of Seville, as well as in the cities of Sant Genís de Fontanes, Nice-Los Angeles, Minnesota and Washington.

She made his debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in the 2016/17 season in *Le nozze di Figaro* and has participated in several El Petit Liceu and Off Liceu-Diàlogos Musicales shows.



## Marta Infante

Healer. Mezzosoprano.

Born in Lleida, she studied singing at the University of Ostrava (Czech Republic). Her musical career has primarily focused on symphony, especially in early music, which has allowed her to perform in the leading Spanish auditoriums and festivals, as well as in South America, the Middle East and Japan. She has worked with conductors such as Víctor Pablo Pérez, Aldo Ceccato, Leon Botstein, Edmon Colomer, Carlos Kalmar, Kees Bakels, Ottavio Dantone, Paul Goodwin, Enrico Onoffri and Vaclav Luks, among other maestros who have conducted her with orchestras such as the National Orchestra of Spain, the Symphony Orchestra of Barcelona and National of Catalonia (OBC), the RTVE, the Community of Madrid, Madrid Symphony, National of El Salvador, and groups such as La Caravaggia, the Baroque Orchestra of Seville, La Capilla Real de Madrid, Capella de Ministrers, Collegium 1704 (Czech Republic) and Anthonello (Japan).

She made her debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in the 2018/19 season with *L'enigma di Lea* and returned with *The Magic Flute* (2021/22).



## Albert Casals

Detective. Tenor.

Born in Barcelona, he began his musical studies at the Escolania de Montserrat. Later, combined with a career in telecommunications engineering, he began to studying singing with professors Xavier Torra and Joaquim Proubasta, and later with Mariella Devia, Viorica Cortez, Carlos Chausson and Dalmau Gonzalez. She began her professional career singing in the Chamber Choir of the Palau de la Música. She has performed in theatres and auditoriums such as the Gran Teatre del Liceu, Teatro Real de Madrid, Auditori de Barcelona, Palau de la Música Catalana de Barcelona, Auditorio Nacional de Madrid, Teatro Campoamor de Oviedo, Teatro Arriaga de Bilbao, Auditorio de Zaragoza, Teatre La Faràndula de Sabadell, Teatro Verdi de Trieste, among others.

He made her debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in the 2010/11 season with *El Retablo de Maese Pedro* had previously sung *La venta focs* at El Petit Liceu (2008/09), and returned with *Pagliacci* (2010/11), *Il turco in Italia* (2012/13), *Il prigionero* (2013/14), *Lucia di Lammermoor* (2015/16), *Il Trovatore*, *Macbeth* (2016/17), *Luisa Miller* (2018/19) and *The Magic Flute* (2021/22).



## Dianne Ico

The Cat

She is a singer and actress born in Barcelona of Filipino parents. Professionally trained in singing, she has specialised in Baroque and lyric technique since 2016. After participating in the *Got Talent Espanya* programme and reaching the final with a golden button, she made her debut in the musical world as Serena Katz in *Fama, el Musical*, produced by Sme-dia and Coco Comín, which after premiering at the Apolo theatre moved to Gran Vía in Madrid in 2022. She currently plays the character of Nala in *The Lion King* at the Teatro Lope de Vega in Madrid.

This is her debut at the Gran Teatre del Liceu.



## Óscar Peñarroya

The drug dealer of El Raval

Born in Barcelona in 1974, he is a composer, pianist and musical director. He earned a higher degree in composition at the conservatory of Badalona and studied piano, contrabass, choral conducting and film composition.

He has composed the music for jingles, audiovisual and corporate events, documentaries and concerts. His opera *El Bosc de Farucàrun* won the Òpera a Secundària contest organised by the Gran Teatre del Liceu and the Teatre Lliure, among others, and his cantata *Virtual*, part of the Cantània project, premiered at the Auditori last year.

In the world of musical theatre, he has written the music for *L'apassionant carrera artística de Marta Gelabert*, *Per molts anys* and *París* and he has scored the music for *Babet* and *La filla del mar*.

He is the creator and musical director of the project *El musical participatiu* organised by Obra Social la Caixa, which has been performed throughout Spain from 2012 to 2019.

He is the director of several choirs, including the Cor Drassanes, which is also participating in *La gata perduda*.

## Chorus

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### Agrupació Coral i Recreativa les Flors de Maig

Director: Cristina Colomer



### Associació Carabutsí

Director: Sam García



### Cor de Dones de Xamfrà

Director: Magalí Sala



### Cor Drassanes

Director: Óscar Peñarroya



## Cor Turull

Director: Manel García



## Coro Kudyapi

Director: Arnel Germán



## Dona Gòspel

Director: Núria Guasch



## El Cor Canta

Directors: Elisenda Carrasco, Eva Martínez  
and Jordi Lluch





### **Grup Mon Raval**

Director: Susana Magich



### **KorraVal Evolution**

Director: Sandra Calisto



### **Musical's Choir**

Director: Cristina Colomer



### **Societat Coral Girasol**

Director: Daniel Palomino



### **TrencaCors and Cor dels Invisibles**

Director: Cristina Colomer



## Entities

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### Mediating agents

More than 250 entities and associations make up the neighbourhood, but not all residents are represented. The primary care centres CAP Drassanes (EAP Raval Sud) and CAP Dr Lluís Sayé (EAP Raval Nord) and the Gòtic-Andreu Nin and Sant Pau-Santa Creu libraries have been key in reaching diverse individuals and exploring with them possible links to promote or participate in the opera.

### Sínia Occupational Centre

Day-care service for individuals with functional diversity. Projects are offered that develop the interests of the people served with the aim of improving their quality of life and promoting their autonomy. Elena Carcedo, Jaume Solé, Jordi Desquens and Oriol MB, accompanied by Roseta Marí and Valle Grande, are the artists who created the four posters together with students from the Massana school.

### El lloc de la dona

Made up of some 50 social entities, educational centres, cultural institutions, commercial associations and individuals linked to the Raval, it works as a network to improve social cohesion, peaceful coexistence and quality of life in the neighbourhood, as well as to foster a sense of belonging in one of the most densely populated and diverse neighbourhoods in Barcelona. In the opera, it has been a key element in the process of discovery, approximation and linkage with the local community by facilitating access to contacts and entities, linking community spaces to explain and conceptualise the project and helping the neighbourhood and the Liceu mutually recognise each other from the beginning and throughout the process.

### Casal de barri del Raval

A municipal facility designed to welcome community participation and coexistence that supports activities aimed at associations and sociocultural development. Active space in the creative process of the opera: some of its professionals have participated in the interviews conducted by the playwright Victoria Szpunberg. It has also served as a rehearsal space for the Kudyapi Choir and a space for the photographs of the neighbours for the costumes of the Raval Choir by the students Anna Gil, Clara Soto and Martha Jordan of the Blanquerna-URL Faculty of Communication and the artist Jordi Guillumet.

### Raval Choir

The Raval Choir, perhaps the most important character in this opera, is made up of 11 amateur choirs from the neighbourhood whose passion and dedication have managed to create a single character despite each group's intrinsic differences. These ensembles are small in terms of the number of singers but not in their importance. They include Sociedad Coral Girasol; large groups such as Drassanes; young people's choirs such as Cor Turull and very young people's groups such as Musicals' Choir and Coro Kudyapi; groups with only female voices such as KorraVal Evolution, Dona Gospel and the Coro de Dones de Xamfrà; and choirs rooted in the neighbourhood such as Grup Mon Raval, Agrupació coral i recreativa Les Flors de Maig and TrencaCors. They have been rehearsing separately since October 2021, each with their own directors under the attentive coordination of Cristina Colomer, and sharing the scores and audios through the technological tool Traction Co-creation Space. In February 2022, they embarked on the collective adventure of meeting and starting to shape this opera character. They have been discovering each other, mingling, joining together and achieving the cohesion of 250 voices that symbolise the strength of a neighbourhood.

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## Collaso i Gil School

A public preschool and primary school located next to the former Benedictine monastery of Sant Pau del Camp, named after the Catalan politician and philanthropist Josep Collaso i Gil. The school opened its doors in 1935. It has been a prime rehearsal space for the choirs in *La gata perduda* from February to September 2022.

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## François Matarasso

François Matarasso is a community artist, writer, researcher, consultant and the author of 'A Restless Art' (London 2019), a book that analyses the history, theory and practice of participative art via both a meticulous study and the author's life experience. He is also one of the nine partners in the European project 'TRACTION Opera Co-creation for a social transformation', which has received financing from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme by virtue of Grant agreement ID: 870610. In TRACTION, François Matarasso has supervised the artistic projects of the Gran Teatre del Liceu, Irish National Opera (INO) and Sociedade Artística Musical dos Pousos (SAMP).

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## Fundació Tot Raval

Made up of some 50 social entities, educational centres, cultural institutions, commercial associations and individuals linked to the Raval, it works as a network to improve social cohesion, peaceful coexistence and quality of life in the neighbourhood, as well as to foster a sense of belonging in one of the most densely populated and diverse neighbourhoods in Barcelona. In the opera, it has been a key element in the process of discovery, approximation and linkage with the local community by facilitating access to contacts and entities, linking community spaces to explain and conceptualise the project and helping the neighbourhood and the Liceu mutually recognise each other from the beginning and throughout the process.

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## Escola Massana. Centre d'art i disseny

Municipal Art and Design Centre of Barcelona, whose pedagogy places students at the epicentre of learning. Together with the creative team of C.O. Sínia, the students Aina Andrés, Alba Abellán, Alba Castellón, Alba Panyella, Ariadna Planchart, Joana Massó, Montserrat Calle and Sílvia Rosell are the authors of the opera's 4 posters, with the support of the artist Curro Claret and the supervision of Diego Ramos. In addition, the sculpture students Albert Gràcia, Elena Villalba, Marianna Bellmunt and Samuel Colominas, under the watchful eye of Joan Navarro, have collaborated in the creation of the set of the comparsa of the cat by the artist José Menchero.

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## Conservatori Liceu Foundation

This is the oldest music teaching institution in the city and the true cradle of musical education in Catalonia. It couples an aspiration for artistic excellence with a social conscience that is expressed in multiple projects to make music a tool for social cohesion and betterment.

Since it was created in 1837, it has offered instruction at all levels and in all musical styles, currently including jazz, modern music and flamenco, in addition to classical music. Many of the country's most outstanding musicians, such as Montserrat Caballé, Victoria de los Ángeles and Joan Guinjoan, have come from its classrooms.

The orchestra of *La gata perduda* is comprised of students from the Centro Superior de la Fundació Conservatori Liceu.

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## Impulsem S.C.C.L.

A non-profit cooperative based on social initiative located in the Raval that works to improve people's quality of life by undertaking integrative educational, social, job and training actions. Abdelaziz M., Ahmad Jumaa A., Ahmed A., Aissa M., Ayoub M., Bouba D., Hamisi S., José Manuel G., Paolo Q., Seydou D. and Soleymane S. are students in the painting module and the authors of the background application work and the application of the varnish on the floor of this opera's set, under the oversight of Alejandro C.

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## Escola de Músics i JPC

Musical training centre with 30 years of history that offers active, open teaching to students of all ages, levels, aptitudes, statuses and origins. Its professionals convey their passion for music in an understanding way and based on the conviction of music's transformative power as an engine of social and individual change. In this opera, Cristina Colomer, head of studies at the school, is the coordinator of all the choirs and direct conductor of Musicals' Choir, TrencaCors and the Agrupació Coral i Recreativa Les Flors de Maig.

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## Street Art Barcelona

Collaborative platform of artists and curators to promote creation that seeks social transformation. It engages in activities related to urban art such as managing and producing the Arnau Gallery project. Curator of the artistic intervention on the floor of the set made by six urban art artists linked to the Raval: Eledu, JLoca, Kenor, Morcky, Musa and Nemo.

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## José Martínez López-Menchero (Stage José Menchero)

Painter and set designer. Studied Fine Arts in Paris. A founding partner of the company Danat Danza, for twelve years he made all the company's sets. He has worked with the companies Lanònima Imperial, La Fanfarra and Herta Frankel. In 1994 he received the Silver Medal of Merit for Fine Arts. He has designed spaces in Barcelona's Festival de la Mercè. Three Wise Men Parade in Barcelona. He has built floats and props for Mon Lliure, designed and made scenery. Poetry show 'Veus paral·leles'. In the opera, author of the set of the comparsa of the cat with the collaboration of sculpture students from the Escola Massana.

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## Ciutat Vella's Community and intercultural mediation service

Service that depends on the Barcelona City Council. The mediators Archana Deb, Arnel Germán, Asma Ochan and Asim Razzaq and volunteers like Cipriano de Guzmán Jr., Soumaya Ben Yahya, Sandra Sotelo, Antonio Montalván, Lamia Osman, Dianne Ico and Mohammad Ekhlas are the authors of the audio files in Bengali, Arabic, Urdu and Tagalog of the La gata perduda newsletter, with the aim of making the text of the monthly publication understandable in other languages spoken in the Raval neighbourhood.

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## Taller de Músics

Pioneer school in disseminating jazz, flamenco and modern popular music. Since it was founded in Barcelona's Raval neighbourhood in 1979, it has built its own system of musical education, creation, production and dissemination. It is a comprehensive, unique artistic mentorship project that aims to take students from the classroom to the stage through art, creativity, spontaneity and enthusiasm for music. The Taller de Músics is bringing the talented young musicians who study in its classrooms to the opera. They play as street musicians and as a heavy metal-punk choir.

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## TRACTION Opera Co-creation for a social transformation

‘TRACTION Opera Co-creation for a Social Transformation’ is a consortium of 9 European partners that over the course of three years have created three new opera projects by exploring new ways of doing opera with communities thanks to the use of innovative technology to connect artists and audiences. The projects are: O TEMPO (SOMOS NÓS), a project of the Sociedad Artística Musical Dos Pousos (SAMP) made with the inmates of the juvenile prison in Leiria (Portugal); Out of the Ordinary/As an nGnách, a virtual reality community opera made with rural communities in Ireland, by the Irish National Opera (INO); and La gata perduda (La gata perduda). The project is led by Vicomtech (Basque Country), and the other partners are François Matarasso, Dublin City University (DCU), Netherlands Foundation of Scientific Research Institutes (NWO-I), the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) and Virtual Reality Ireland (VRI). TRACTION is funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 programme under Grant agreement ID: 870610 and has been underway between 2020 and 2022.

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## Xamfrà, Centre de Música i Escena del Raval

Music and theatre centre in Barcelona’s Raval district that uses music, theatre and dance as tools for social participation and inclusion. Generators of community artistic development processes that work towards social co-responsibility of initiatives which guarantee access to artistic practice for people of all ages, with special attention to individuals and groups at risk of social exclusion. The Cor de Dones de Xamfrà is one of the 11 choirs that have been playing the role of the Raval Choir in *La gata perduda* since the beginning of the project.

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## Top Manta

Non-profit worker cooperative with close ties to the Raval. Its mission is to promote a self-employment project for people who have migrated and to favour their job placement. Some of its activities are related to textile finishing, sewing and printing services. They are the authors of more than 700 costumes pieces for the Raval Choir.

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## Residents of the Raval neighbourhood

Residents of the Raval neighbourhood and/or individuals who ‘experience’ the Raval in a broad sense, whose life experiences have made them familiar with the neighbourhood, have participated in the project throughout its development: Interviewed by Victoria Szpunberg, their testimony has been a source of information about the history and reality of the neighbourhood, or alternatively a source of inspiration when writing the story of the original script: Antònia Raya, Blanca, César Martínez, Charo de la Calle, Elena Varela, Emilio Ros-Fàbregas, Francisco Ubach, Gloria, Hajar Hoummi, Isabel Gutsens (Déborah la Pícara), Javed Mughal, Javier Alegría, Jesús Floro, Juan Tomás, José Domínguez, José Pardo-Tomás, Juan Francisco Gibaja Bao, Leandro Crespo, Lluís Trepas, Manuel Delgado, Michael Harram, Najat Es-safi, Puri, Sam García, Santiago Higuera and Sonja Poehlmann. The others are the 260 residents who have been photographed and their portraits printed on the costumes of the Raval Choir, thus increasing the neighbourhood’s footprint in the opera.

“Ever tried. Ever failed.  
No matter. Try again.  
Fail again. Fail better.”

**Samuel Beckett,**  
*Worstward Ho*, 1983

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## Staff list of the Gran Teatre del Liceu

### GENERAL MANAGER

**Valentí Oviedo**

### Executive Secretary

Ariadna Pedrola

### Chief legal officers

**Elionor Villén**

Gemma Porta

Lola Pozo Flor

### ARTISTIC DIRECTION AND PRODUCTION

**Víctor García de Gomar**

**Leticia Martín**

### Planning

Yolanda Blaya

### Contract administration and extras

Albert Castells

Meritxell Penas

### Executive production

Sílvia García

Muntsa Inglada

Miriam Martín Ferrer

Joan Rimbau

### Special event production

Deborah Tarridas

### Surtitles

Anabel Alenda

Gloria Nogué

### MUSICAL DIRECTION

**Josep Pons**

**Conxita García**

**Antoni Pallès**

Josep M. Armengol

Agnès Pérez

Núria Piquer

### Music archives

Elena Rosales

Irene Valle

### Répétiteurs

Rodrigo de Vera

Vanessa García

David-Huy Nguyen-Phung

Jaume Tribó

Véronique Werklé

### Regidoria musical

Lluís Alsius

Luca Ceruti

Micky Galindo

### Orchestra

Kai Gleusteen

Oscar Alabau

Olga Aleshinski

Oriol Alguero

Nieves Aliaño

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Cristina Tena

Llorenç Valero

Nauzet Valerón Brito

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Elisabet Vilaplana

Helena Zaborowska

Guisela Zannerini

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Gemma Pujol

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### Audiovisual

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Santi Gila

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Lluís Palomar

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Ona Rovira

Anna Rueda

Berta Sagrera

Sara Serrano

Marc Sevilla

Maria Solà

Maria Solé

Maria Torredeflot

Nikki Van der Meer

Francisco Zambrano

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Marc Comas

Guillermo Fabra

Paula Miranda

Natalia Paradela

Eduard Torrents

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coordination**

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Miguel Ángel García

Pablo Huerres

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Salvador Pozo

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Ferran Capella

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J. Pere Gil

Anna Junquera

Toni Larios

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Ferran Pratdesaba

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Stefano Armani

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Antoni Lebrón

Ana Pérez

Andrea Poulastrou

Lluís Rabassa

Jaume Roig

Josep Roses

Mariano Sánchez

Vicente Santos

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Immaculada Faura

Xesca Llabrés

Jordi Soler

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Chloe Campbell

Alejandro Curcó

Rafael Espada

David Farré

Cristina Fortuny

Carme González

Esther Linuesa

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Dolors Rodríguez

Gloria Royo

Javier Sanz

Montserrat Vergara

Ana Sabina Vergara

Alba Viader

Patrícia Viguer

Eva Vilchez

**Character design**

Susana Ben Hassan

Monica Núñez

Liliana Pereña

Miriam Pintado

Núria Valero

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**Direction**

Nora Farrés

**Coordination**

Irene Calvés, Sònia Cañas, Helena Escobar

**Contents**

Albert Galceran

**Contents of this programme**

Víctor García de Gomar, Albert Galceran, Ricard Soler Mallol, François Matarasso, Victoria Szpunberg, Arnau Tordera I, Fundació Tot Raval

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**Information about publicity and Patronage and Sponsorship programme**

liceubarcelona.cat / mecenes@liceubarcelona.cat / 93 485 86 31

**Comments and Suggestions**

edicions@liceubarcelona.cat

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